WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD

NORTH COAST REGION

EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

January 2003

CLEANUPS AND SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION

Update on the Glass Beach Property Clean Closure in Fort Bragg

[Staff Contact: Craig Hunt]

The excavation of wastes between the bluffs at Glass Beach in Fort Bragg has been completed, pending confirmation sampling analytical results. Approximately 8,000 cubic yards of waste and waste-impacted soil were removed. The Solid Waste Cleanup Program of the California Integrated Waste Management Board performed this work in January and early February. The extent of waste fill was removed leaving native material, primarily bedrock and sand. Removal work is shown in the first picture, in which the excavator is sitting on waste with burn ash. The two workers are prying amalgamated wastes off the exposed rock. The second picture shows a completed excavation area. High tide now reaches further inland in this area and has deposited beach sand, rock, and glass on the bedrock floor. Although significantly more waste was removed than was initially anticipated, the project stayed on schedule, partly due to a relatively dry January. After receipt of a clean closure report certifying that the project was completed in accordance with the Waste Discharge Requirements (Order No. R1-2002-0099), the Order can be rescinded.

TIMBER HARVEST DIVISION

Pocket Canyon THP Inspection

[Staff Contact: Cherie Blatt]

On February 5 and 6, 2003, Regional Water Board (Regional Water Board) staff participated in the preharvest inspection (PHI) for timber harvest plan (THP)1-02-216SON. The THP proposes to harvest 185 acres of timber including the conversion of 49 acres to vineyard. Agencies attending the PHI included representatives from California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, California Department of Fish and Game, California Geologic Survey, CalTrans, Sonoma County Planning, California Water Service (CWS), and interested citizens with domestic water supplies in the Pocket Canyon Creek watershed. The CWS provides water to approximately 50 homes by tapping the underflow of the alluvial sediments of Pocket Canyon Creek. Increased turbidity of the water supply is reported during heavy storms and flood events.

During the PHI, staff concerns included: a proposed road in the floodplain of Pocket Canyon Creek; a Class I watercourse containing multiple domestic water supplies (DWSs); the CWS domestic water intake; a misclassified watercourse; an unmapped spring; an unmapped unstable area; and trees marked for harvest in a Class II channel which is prohibited under Forest Practice Rule (FPR) 916.9(e) for Threatened and Impaired Watersheds.

The Regional Water Board staff PHI Report will recommend corrections and additional information in order to bring the plan into conformance with the FPRs and Basin Plan. The report will recommend more effective erosion control to ensure DWS protection. The proposed road in the Pocket Canyon Creek floodplain requires further evaluation to address increased sedimentation, flooding and impacts to DWSs. Analysis of an alternative for the road is needed. A new design and location for the main vineyard reservoir is also needed due to the potential for discharge of sediment and pesticides to DWSs. In addition, one vineyard unit will be recommended for disapproval by reviewing agencies due to the absence of an access road and lack of water supply.

Proposed location for the bridge across Pocket Canyon Creek and abutments (concrete, gravel and soil fill) in the floodplain.

A vineyard reservoir is proposed to be built just upgradient of this in-stream DWS. Reservoir overflow may result in pesticide and sediment impacts to the downstream DWS.

WATERSHED MANAGEMENT DIVISION

State Water Resources Control Board Adopts 2002 303(d) List

[Staff Contact: David Leland]

On February 4, 2003 the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) approved Resolution No. 2003 – 0009, which approves the California 2002 Clean Water Act 303(d) list of water quality limited segments. The complete list can be found at: http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/tmdl/docs/2002_cwa_section_303d_list_wqls_020403.pdf. The US EPA is scheduled to adopt the list by early March 2003.

The 2002 303(d) list includes the following waterbodies, in addition to those on the 1998 list:

Big River - Temperature
Gualala River – Temperature
Jacoby Creek – Sediment
Laguna de Santa Rosa – Dissolved Oxygen
Lake Mendocino – Mercury
Lake Sonoma – Mercury
Mad River – Temperature
Redwood Creek – Temperature
Russian River – Temperature
Russian River (Monte Rio area and Healdsburg Memorial Beach) – Pathogens
Santa Rosa Creek – Pathogens
Stemple Creek – Sediment
Ten Mile River – Temperature
Tule Lake and Lower Klamath Lake National Wildlife Refuge – pH

The following North Coast waterbodies have been placed on a Monitoring List:

Alder Creek – Sediment and Temperature
Beith Creek – Sediment
Brush Creek – Sediment
Casper Creek – Pathogens
Cottaneva Creek – Sediment
Dehaven Creek – Sediment
East Fork Trinity River – Mercury
Elk Creek – Sediment
Greenwood Creek – Sediment and Temperature
Grotzman Creek – Sediment
Hardy Creek – Sediment
Howard Creek – Sediment
Humboldt Bay – PCBs and Dieldrin and Sediment
Juan Creek – Sediment
Klamath River – Sediment
Laguna de Santa Rosa – Nutrients
Mad River Slough – PCBs
Mallo Pass Creek – Sediment
Pudding Creek – Sediment
Russian River – Diazinon
Schooner Gulch – Sediment
Shasta River – Sediment and Nutrients
Tule Lake and Lower Klamath National Wildlife Refuge – Dissolved Oxygen and Unionized Ammonia
Usal Creek – Sediment
Virgin Creek – Pathogens
Wages Creek – Sediment

NCWAP Now And For The Future

[Staff Contact: Bob Klamt]

The five-agency North Coast Watershed Assessment Program (NCWAP) began in 2000 with a special legislative appropriation originally envisioned to last seven years. Like many other state programs, this effort is experiencing budget problems. The Governor's budget provided on January 10, 2003 included significant cuts in the NCWAP for the Department of Fish and Game, Department of Water Resources, California Geological Survey, and California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. Our Regional Water Board retained its funding for six staff. NCWAP managers continue to meet to plan completing this fiscal year's commitments, and strategize for the future.

The NCWAP started with five watersheds for assessment: Redwood Creek, Mattole River, Big River, Albion River, and Gualala River. The primary purpose of the effort is to provide the public and agencies with a comprehensive assessment of current watershed conditions, some perspective on historical trends, an interdisciplinary synthesis of watershed information that involves exploring relationships of the various watershed factors (e.g., geology and land use to fishery habitat values), and recommendations for stream restoration and improvements in land use activities. The end products of the assessment are watershed data (including GIS files) and an assessment report for each watershed that provides: a detailed description of the watershed, its geology, hydrology, and land use, water quality data, fish habitat data, and recommendations. In addition to providing this information on the full watershed scale, each report includes detailed information by subbasin. For instance, the Gualala River

watershed was divided into five subbasins for assessment. Appendices to the report provide the raw information that was used in the assessment for those who wish to delve deeper into the information. The assessment information is very useful in TMDL development and implementation.

Fiscal Year 2002-03 commitments include: 1) completion of final assessment reports for Redwood Creek, Mattole River, and Gualala River, 2) completion of public draft assessment reports for the Big and Albion rivers, 3) revision of the NCWAP methods manual, and 4) continued involvement at some level in the Scott and Middle Fork Eel river watersheds. Progress and plans for these items are discussed below:

1. The final assessment reports for the Mattole and Gualala rivers are at the Governor's Office undergoing review at this time. Once we have received their review, we will revise the assessment reports accordingly, and they will be available for public use. We are planning workshops in both watersheds to present the reports and stimulate discussion about the recommendations and future activities in the watersheds. The Redwood Creek assessment report is in draft form, and will be submitted to the Governor's Office in the next month.
2. The process for the Big and Albion rivers is on a similar track, but not with more limited progress. Data gathering and analysis will be completed by all the agencies by the end of March. Interdisciplinary synthesis will start then, with completion of the report as a public draft early June, 2003. Outreach will be part of the process as with the other watersheds.
3. The methods manual was an additional task added to NCWAP by the legislature early in the program. The current draft was developed, used, and underwent scientific peer review. Now it is time to revise the manual with the benefit of the peer review and 18 months of experience in the program. We expect that revision to take a couple of months, preceding the release of the public drafts for the Big and Albion rivers.
4. The Scott and Middle Fork Eel rivers were designated as NCWAP priorities for the coming fiscal year. Some outreach has occurred, and we are evaluating the level of effort we will devote to those watersheds this fiscal year and the potential for future assessment given the budget situation.

Fiscal Year 2003-04 presents a whole new set of problems. The NCWAP managers are exploring possibilities to keep some modicum of the program alive and provide some level of assessment over the next few years. The level to which other agencies may be able to participate is unknown at this time.

The Watershed Assessment and Monitoring Unit (Unit) that handles NCWAP program management in the Region will shift focus with our funding to the TMDL program, assisting in TMDL development and implementation. We plan on continuing watershed assessment work in an interdisciplinary fashion, but likely without any large amount of assistance from other state agencies. Those assessments will provide useful information to the TMDL development program in high priority watersheds, like the Scott and Shasta rivers. In addition, the NCWAP assessments for the Mattole, Big, Albion, and Gualala rivers, and Redwood Creek contain recommendations that form a good basis for TMDL implementation based on the assessments. We will work closely with TMDL implementation staff in the Region in their outreach and development of implementation plans. Another advantage of the recommendations is their utility in prioritization of restoration activities and providing context for our grants program. Though the details are being developed, we will enhance the TMDL development and implementation processes and expect to accelerate some of the tasks.

Additionally, the Unit plans on providing special assistance to enforcement efforts that can benefit from a team-oriented assessment. Our approach will be to provide a assessments for high priority cases, increasing the level of documentation and response.

Associated with this concept is complaint response for those complaints that will benefit from a more in-depth approach. For instance, concern has been raised by local landowners and the Department of Fish and Game regarding the large algae bloom in the Navarro River estuary last summer. We will begin a "watch-dog" sampling program in the late spring of 2003, continuing through the summer to help explain the

situation and provide some ideas on causes and possible actions.

In summary, while the NCWAP will change significantly in scope as a cooperative state agency program, the Regional Water Board staff will continue to provide assessments in the spirit of NCWAP in support of the TMDL program, be involved in full NCWAP assessments to the extent they are foreseen for the coming fiscal year, and assist in assessments of pollution events for complaint response and enforcement.

An Unprecedented Event:
First Flush on the Russian River

[Staff Contact: Janet Blake]

On November 7, 2002 a coalition of public agencies and private groups conducted water quality sampling during the first rain of the year along the Russian River. The first significant rain of the year is known as "first flush" because the runoff from the land contains the pollutants that accumulated during the dry season (that lasted over 5 months this year). This was an unprecedented event. Never before has such a large coalition of groups cooperated to collect water quality data during such a short period of time. Over 70 sets of samples were captured at 26 stations between midnight and 10AM.

Cooperating in this effort were over 100 volunteer monitors from: the Russian River Watershed Council; UC Cooperative Extension; Mendocino and Sotoyome Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs); Russian RiverKeeper; Community Clean Water Institute; West County Watershed Network; Santa Rosa Creek Stewardship; Atascadero/Green Valley Watershed Council; Cities of Santa Rosa, Sebastopol and Healdsburg; the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board; the State Water Resources Control Board's Clean Water Team; and US Environmental Protection Agency. The data will be used by the Russian River Watershed Council to identify problem areas, target management measures, and inform the public about constituent transport. The North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board will use the data to prioritize further monitoring, grant funding, and future actions.

First flush events present harsh field conditions and logistic challenges. Samples must be taken during the first storm of the year that, many times, occurs during the night. Teams of samplers must be ready to get to their designated stations when the rain runoff has reached the waterway they are sampling. Months of preparation preceded the effort. First and foremost the sampling objectives and data use were determined. Other activities included getting volunteers to do the sampling and training them in proper procedures, collecting and organizing the equipment and supplies, and determining where and what to sample. The overall sampling objectives for this event were to characterize the runoff and identify sources of potential pollutants. In particular volunteers were asking where in the watershed will the first rain yield runoff, what are the highest concentrations of storm water constituents, whether there are sources of diazinon in the Russian River watershed, and are *Escherichia. coli* (E. coli) counts during the first flush comparable to those in the Monterey Bay first flush counts?

The sampling stations were chosen on the basis of safety, accessibility, legality, and usefulness to data users. The parameters that were sampled include rainfall, flow, conductivity, temperature, pH, ammonia, nitrate, phosphate, diazinon, turbidity, total suspended solids, total coliform, and *E. coli*. Three samples were taken at 30 minutes intervals at each station. The sampling included the required field duplicates and equipment blanks. The Sotoyome RCD provided their conference room as the "event center," and the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board provided time and equipment in their in-house laboratory for sample analysis. Trained citizen volunteers conducted sample analysis and entered the data into a database along with the State and Regional Water Board's representatives. With extraordinary effort over a dozen lab volunteers were able to meet the holding times for ammonia, phosphate, and conducted turbidity testing and total suspended solid analyses.

This collaborative monitoring effort is especially important to the Regional Water Boards because it is an action that directly addresses the goals in both the *Strategic Plan* and *The Plan for California's Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program.* In the *Strategic Plan* the vision is a "sustainable California" that means landowners (citizens) must be involved for the long-term because they control land use. It seems there would be no better way to be involved than to learn water quality monitoring in ones own creek.

The values are “service” and public trust, “integrity” to earn the trust of those served by partnering and education, and “leadership” using innovative approaches such as citizen monitoring of water quality. The operating principles of the *Strategic Plan* are that Boards collaborate with agencies and other key stakeholders such as landowners, and Boards provide education and outreach so citizens understand their responsibilities and abilities to protect water quality. By monitoring and working with the Regional Water Boards and local agencies, citizens learn their responsibilities and abilities and become stewards of their land.

WATERSHED PROTECTION DIVISION

Alexander Valley Casino Landslide

[Staff Contact: Paul Keiran]

The new River Run Indian Gaming Casino in Alexander Valley recently experienced a large earthen landslide. The slide first was first noticed on January 7 and continued to move until January 11. Estimates range anywhere from 30,000-50,000 yards of soil that have moved. The slide just missed the casino itself, and threatened the casino’s physical plant. Staff found no indication that slide materials reached any surface waters. Heavy equipment was immediately mobilized to unload portions of the slide containing saturated soils, and to buttress the slide by pushing drier soils back uphill and out from the toe.

Steel I-beams are presently being placed across the slide in several places in order to stabilize the hillside. A system of drainage pipes is being placed within the slide repair in order to permanently drain areas in and around the slide. Once all of the steel has been placed, soils will be engineered back into place on the hillside. The potential need for a toe retaining wall, potentially needed to protect the casino’s physical plant, is being contemplated.

No slide soils have been removed offsite and remain in large stockpile areas. Regional Water Board staff have been working closely with casino personnel with respect to continuing to protect water quality during the slide repair.

Photo 1: Front view of slide

Photo 2: Facility at toe of slide

General Waste Discharge Requirements Of Winery Waste to Land

[Staff Contact: Mark Neely]

On January 30, staff mailed out approximately 230 letters to winery owners throughout the region, notifying them of the need to submit applications for coverage under the "General Waste Discharge Requirements For Discharges Of Winery Waste To Land." These were wineries that we had not regulated in the past. Previously, letters had been sent out to all those wineries who had received waivers of Waste Discharge Requirements in the past, and to all new wineries. The responses to the latest mailing have largely been cordial, although some owners have been upset (particularly about the need to pay the annual fee.) Staff will continue to provide updates to the Regional Water Board on this effort.

Update on the Garcia River TMDL Implementation Plan

[Staff Contact: Lisa Hulette]

On February 14, 2003 Bill Winchester and Lisa Hulette, Regional Water Board staff, met with John Harper and David Lewis of the University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) program to discuss the Garcia River Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Implementation Plan. John Harper is the Livestock and Natural Resources Advisor in Mendocino and Lake Counties for the UCCE, and David Lewis is the Watershed Management Advisor in Sonoma County for the UCCE. The main purpose of the meeting was to discuss how our respective staffs could coordinate our TMDL Implementation Program with the Rangeland Watershed Program offered by the UCCE.

The Rangeland Watershed Program is a resource that landowners can utilize to develop their own ranch management plans which provide for water quality planning on rural watershed properties. It was discussed in detail and agreement was reached that, with appropriate modifications, ranch management plans could be used to satisfy the requirements of the Garcia TMDL Implementation Plan. Regional Water Board staff will be working closely with Mr. Harper and Mr. Lewis, so that landowners who participate in the Rangeland Watershed Program can produce ranch management plans that are also in compliance with the Garcia River TMDL Action Plan. We are planning to hold a field workshop for Regional Water Board members this spring at the UCCE Hopland Research Facility in order to familiarize Regional Water Board members with the UCCE program.

TIMBER HARVEST ACTIVITIES

During the month of January 2003 the Timber Harvest Division received 8 new Timber Harvest Plans (THPs) and no amendments to THPs. Staff participated in First Review meetings for 3 THPs and participated in Second Review meetings for 19 THPs. Twenty-three inspections were also conducted during January 2003.

NOTE: This is a snap shot of a working database with data entered as of February 10, 2003.

CLEANUP AND ABATEMENT ORDERS

There were no Cleanup and Abatement Orders issued during the month of January 2003.

CALIFORNIA WATER CODE SECTION 13267 LETTER ORDERS

There were seven California Water Code section 13267(b) Letter Orders issued during the month of January 2003. The letters issued went Lino's Service, 318 Main Street, Ferndale; Lewis, Carolyn, 3215 Parkway Drive, Crescent City; Bartley, Bill, 340 Highway 101 North, Crescent City; Carlotta Lumber Company, Highway 36, Carlotta; Tomich Property, 9000 Mill Station Road, Sebastopol; and two letters went to The Pacific Lumber Company for the Freshwater Creek Watershed.

SPILLS, COMPLAINTS, AND INVESTIGATIONS

Twelve complaints were received during the months of January 2003. No spills were reported during January 2003.

ADMINISTRATIVE CIVIL LIABILITY COMPLAINTS/ ORDERS

No Administrative Civil Liability (ACL) Complaints or Orders were issued during January 2003.

UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK CLEANUP FUND PROGRAM

For the month of January 2003 , there has been a total of $790,372 in funds issued to tank owners in Region 1 from the Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Fund. There were seven (7) letters of commitment issued during the month of January 2003.

CLEAN WATER ACT SECTION 401 CERTIFICATIONS

Eight new applications for Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification were received in January 2003. Five 401 Certifications were issued in January 2003.

Information regarding all proposed certifications is available at our Internet web site at:

http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb1/Public_Notices/401certs/notice401.html

PUBLIC FILE REVIEW

From January 1 through January 31, 2003, two written requests were made for review of the Regional Water Board's records. In addition, a total of 42 people came into the office and requested file review during the month of January 2003.

MARCH REGIONAL WATER BOARD WORKSHOPS AND MEETINGS

On March 11, 12, and 19, 2003 the North Coast Regional Water Board will hold Public Workshops and Scoping Sessions for the Beneficial Use Amendment to the Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan) for the North Coast Region. The March 11 workshop will be held at the Eureka Public Marina, Wharfinger Building in Eureka. The March 12 workshop will be held at the Best Western Miners Inn in Yreka. The March 19 workshop will be held at the North Coast Regional Water Board's Hearing Room in Santa Rosa.

The Regional Water Board will have its regularly scheduled Board Meeting on March 27, 2003 at the North Coast Regional Water Board's Hearing Room.

The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy costs, see our web-site at http://www.swrcb.ca.gov.